

## The Catholic Church and Democracy

WILLIAM CARDINAL O'CONNELL

*An address delivered at historic Faneuil Hall, on July 4, 1934.*

I AM not going to present a formal oration. There will be plenty of oratory today, and although the occasion is worthy even of the most inspired oratory, the times demand of us far more than that. We are the oldest democracy in existence. We are observing this 158th anniversary of our democracy in times which have tested every other form of government in the world. Our need today is not oratory but thought—clear, honest and deep thought—about our form of government; about the origin of democracy; about its principles and progress; and about its dangers.

We know the meaning of democracy—a people's government. It is the expression of the people's inherent right to rule. Its origin goes back to God, Himself.

God made man in His own image and likeness and placed him in the paradise that He had made, and blessed him, and said, "Increase and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it and rule over it." That is the inspired way of declaring the origin of democracy. That is the very foundation of democracy. God made man like to Himself and made him lord of all creation. The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof, but He has given it to men for our inheritance. The fish, the flesh, the fowl, and all the fruits and products of the earth belong to man. All men are equally creatures of the Lord and rulers of earth; and equally all have the right to bring earth under their subjection. This is the Divine right of men, given to them by God.

This right contained another right, as truly coming from the Lord; implanted by Him in our nature. As we were created intelligent we had the duty to use our mind. The right to rule the earth was no small gift, nor was it given to one man alone. By the very necessity of the case, by a law of nature, God gave man the right to organize his work. The very complexity of harmonizing each one's right with all men's right—the need of peace and order incited man to share and portion out his common right. Man did divide the common right; and chose now king, now judge, now magis-

trates. To each or all of these they gave as much or as little as their need dictated: it was theirs to give. And thus the people made their government. That was the origin of Democracy. It goes back beyond the furthest ages that we know—it finds its origin in God's creation.

These are fundamental ideas, well known to every student of history. If I recall them now, it is that you may give thought to them, for things may be too well known to be thought about; they are too easily taken for granted, and thus they are forgotten. It is because these principles were forgotten in the past that they were changed and lost.

#### AUTOCRACY

The first thing men forgot was their own right to choose their rulers. They let other men look out for that, and lost its exercise themselves. They suffered selfish men to stay in power. They saw their kings assume the right to rule, as if it was their due, their very own. That was Autocracy.

It did not start by usurpation. Its first step was the popular neglect of government. The people selfishly cared first for their own material affairs. Nor was usurpation its second step. The supreme exaltation of kings came from some among the people, who found that this fitted best their selfish interests. A centralized efficient rule procured such great advantages that it was swept into power despite itself. Only then arrived Autocracy.

As masters of the people now instead of their delegated legislators, rulers even went so far as to replace the law of God with their own whim or fancy. They seized the power of God and styled themselves Divine. Such were the Roman Julius and the Roman Augustus, who both styled themselves *Divus Cæsar*. Here is a typical instance of self-assumed Divine right. I choose to name them from among the scores of others, because they most of all have left their mark upon the civil government of the world.

I choose to name them also for another reason. In the reign of the first Augustus, God, Himself, came down to earth to put an everlasting check to their Autocracy. These are the words of Christ Who came to bring back justice as well as love to all humanity. "Render to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and to God the things that are God's." That was the *Magna Carta* of Democracy. It vindicated the

Rights of God in human society: it restricted human rule to things of earth. And Jesus Christ was crucified for that principle, the freedom of the spirit.

#### DEMOCRACY AND THE CHURCH

It was the Church of Christ, recruited from the poor and lowly, and from philosophers and thinkers, that first gave men the right again to call their souls their own. The Church of Christ upheld God's Right and man's against this so-called Cæsarism and the Divine Right of Kings. The Christian Church is the modern source of all Democracy.

She taught and teaches that all men are God's creatures, nay more, God's children; that none among them has the right, begotten of himself, to rule others without due reference to the Supreme Governor and Lawgiver. She taught and teaches that men's right to choose other men to wield authority is exercised to ensure just order which begets both peace and happiness, and that this right of man has come to him from God. She taught that all civil order coming from God as it does must have justice for its expression. And that order and peace companion justice. She taught and teaches that Right is superior to Might. She taught always what we know as Democracy and she condemned always what we know as Autocracy.

She did more than teach—she practised. She was herself the first true Democracy. In the Church no man was born to rule. Even the lowly born could rise to highest place. The clergy, then as now, came for the most part from the people. The people chose them, brought them to the Church for training, asked for and rejoiced in their ordination.

It is but a proper presentation of the truth to say that the clergy were the representatives of the people during our early and middle ages. The greatest step in the medieval progress of Democracy was the addition of the body of the clergy to the body of the nobles in the councils of the king. It further may be said that the next step was also, in great measure, due to the Church. It was the rise of the new social class of city workers and merchants. They grew up through the Church's fostering care and example, and by her aid were added as guilds to the existing government. Before the Middle Ages ended, and at the time when all the world was Catholic, the modern Parliament was formed. It

dates back eight hundred years, to the same twelfth century that saw the rise of the University.

Not only in England and France, but in every Christian country there was a Parliament. The Church had so diffused the teaching of the people's rights that no king or prince was able then to over-centralize his power, or obtain the money needed for that purpose, without the consultation and approval of his people.

They brought to Parliament their Christian training quite as much as their class consciousness. They plainly acted as a human check on Monarchy. Their rights were always on their lips. The medieval trend was clearly democratic.

It would be a pleasant task for me to bring to mind the many other things that have been forgotten, of religion's place in the progress of Democracy. Suffice it here to state what every scholar knows, that in the Middle Ages the Church was the greatest check to the autocracy of rulers. The Church was the best and truest friend the common people had.

#### THE MODERN STATE AND THE CHURCH

In this review of how Democracy progressed, I come to modern times. They started well. The Church had raised the people up and formed the Parliament. The Church had also brought about the Christian Monarchy, which happily, though slowly, took the place of Feudalism. The modern State was the child of the Church. Local and popular liberty was being nicely balanced by a strong central authority. The Church stood sponsor for them both. Christian civilization had arrived at a peak in the thirteenth century, when modern times most properly begin, but then it started to decline.

Then Autocracy again put forth its claims, and one by one the Christian States were Cæsarized, by force. Each king aspired to be Cæsar Redivivus. Not Germany alone, or England, trod this path. Even France and Spain went just as wrong. Their kings also opposed the mediating influence of the Popes hitherto acknowledged as a fruitful check to tyranny. And it is almost a truism to say that when the Papacy was weakened, Parliament soon decayed.

Let us come now to the story of our own particular kind of Democracy. For the two hundred years between the Wars of the Roses and the English Revolution, the power

of the crown in England increased at the expense of the people's rights. The Absolutism which the Tudors practised was made a theory of government under the Stuarts. The Church was made subordinate to the King's rule and even the King's whim. Parliament ceased to be the voice of the people. The royally established Church and the cringing Parliament became the tools of the tyrant. The theory of the Divine Right of Kings took its place in the constitution of England. There was no freedom of Spirituals, no freedom of Temporals. The crown controlled worship, silenced speech, censored press, confiscated property and even violated the basic right of life.

This was the system of Autocracy from which many free spirits fled to found in the new world their own idea of freedom. It was the system which Englishmen in the homeland overthrew by regicide. It was the system which finally drove the Stuarts from the throne. The English Revolution gave England a new constitution—a compromise with kings, a bill of rights for men. Deep, bitter, and lasting hostility to the Tudors and their successors, the Stuarts, and their system was the inheritance of the American colonists. Passionate attachment to their liberties as granted them by the English Constitution marked their beginning and their growth. And when, under the Hanoverian, George III, Autocracy was set up in defiance of the colonists' rights, it brought the American Revolution.

#### THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE AND THE CHURCH

This time there was to be no question of compromise. The fathers of this Republic had no intention of merely recalling a bill of rights, compelling grants from any unwilling king. They threw over the autocracy of a tyrannous monarchy and made a valiant, forceful declaration of the rights of man. They established here a union of our free and independent states.

A passion for their right made these heroic men throw their all into that struggle for independence. Men like Washington and Carroll and Jefferson and Adams had intelligence, wealth and a noble conception of human rights and they, and the rest of the noble band of the fathers of this Nation, gave proof of the sincerity of their professions by dedicating their lives and their fortunes to the redemption

of freedom, liberty and the rights of the people. They thus won back their freedom in spirituals and their freedom in speech, in press, in property, in home. These were the things they fought for: their rights as men.

In that immortal Declaration of Independence these ideas found utterance. Their style and phraseology was that of Jefferson, the great tribune of the rights of man, whose brilliant intellect and ardor in the cause for which he fought led him to know the whole history of human oppression and liberation from wrong. A student so profoundly informed of all the great traditional doctrines of government cannot be supposed to be ignorant of the doctrine taught and upheld for centuries by the Church and enunciated at the very time when Autocracy was most forcibly practised by the kings of Europe, in the writings of a Cardinal of the Church, the great philosopher, sociologist and saint—Robert Bellarmine. All praise then to these two champions of liberty, Bellarmine, the Roman Cardinal, the great enunciator of the doctrines of human freedom, and Jefferson, their fearless champion.

These doctrines embraced the three fundamental principles of our democracy—all men created equal—government dependent on the consent of the people—and the right of a free assembly. On these three principles the American Constitution was worked out, a Constitution which was the normal result of those principles of government which the Church had forever upheld.

The American Constitution was an epoch-making document. It contains a Divinely given wisdom, more nicely formulated perhaps than any in the world before. It was the long expected fruition of Christian ages. If it is properly observed, the people are forever saved from all the dangers of the ever-to-be-feared Autocracy. If properly observed! For it may be viciously altered, perverted even, as its predecessors were. Thus, our Charter of Liberty and Democracy, has its dangers. They lie in our own forgetting and neglecting.

#### DANGERS OF DEMOCRACY

It is possible that we may forget the very source of all our rights. If we are born in the highest sense into equality it is because we were created with the right of equality. We are

equally the children of God. Now it is possible to forget God and God's law. That is the very first and very greatest danger to our Democracy—Ireligion.

We would not so forget if we were not so absorbed in selfish things and in this material world. There is a base materialism which thinks only of the gathering of worldly goods to satisfy its foolish sentiments of vanity and greed. It thrusts aside the law of God because it will not be retarded in its selfish course. And greed and vanity unchecked finally reach the unutterable blasphemy of the denial of God, Himself. There is no use denying that we face today these dangers of Ireligion, Infidelity, and even Atheism.

They constitute a peril greater than any other. They undermine the very source of right. Unless the thought of God as the Supreme Ruler is kept clear in the mind and obedience to His Law is kept strong in the heart, we may find might replacing right, and men's equality an empty phrase. Unless God and His Law are always in our thoughts we shall come finally to think of ourselves alone, and selfishness is at the root of every disorder in government.

The second thing that we must not forget is our right to judge justly our civic rulers. They are by law the appointees, and the agents of the Nation. They are responsible to the Nation. We choose them to protect the public weal. They must not serve a mere group, and least of all, themselves. We do not get our rights from them. Their right to rule comes from us as the whole people.

The lesson of the past is plain in this. If we forget or neglect to exercise our legitimate control of those whom we appoint to govern us they will inevitably exercise an unjust control of the whole people. They will dictate to us even against our will. They will rule as if they had a Divine Right to rule, and that is Autocracy. We must not, even in our greatest need, forget the nice control, the checks and balancing of powers, worked out in our Democracy. And if the need demands a very large grant of our power to our chosen rulers, we must watch the time when that need ceases, and retrieve our temporary grant.

The complexities and crises of modern life may require varying applications of the fundamental principles of our Constitution. Rulers are not given power only by tax payers. Wealth is not essential for holding office nor must

an office be used for the unjust acquisition of wealth. Again the danger here is base materialism, which regards only human possessions and ignores humanity. We have a most vigilant work to do in constantly applying the true principles of our Democracy.

And finally a word about our place in the world. As no single man can stand absolutely alone, so no nation can stand absolutely alone. The well being of every nation requires a sense of security in the world. For this reason, America, great as our nation undoubtedly is, does not and cannot stand alone because Americans are not the only men of earth. For all the rest we must have that respect and kindly feeling which both our Constitution and the Gospels teach. But those very principles demand in turn that the other nations of the earth show to America respect and justice.

"All men are created equal. They are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights, among which are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." These are priceless treasures. They are our God-given heritage. May God preserve America and may He bless and protect those who, under His guidance and in His place, safeguard our rights and our institutions!

## Success and Faith

HON. JOHN A. MATTHEWS, LL.D., K.M.

*An address delivered to the Graduates of Boston College and Boston College Law School on June 13, 1934.*

MY heart and soul are filled with gratitude and joy, and memories of my boyhood and adolescent days in beloved Massachusetts and in my native city Malden, crowd upon me as I rise to speak to you on this glorious occasion and in this distinguished presence. The proud and honorable place which Boston College has occupied in the annals of Catholic education for nigh on to three quarters of a century under the cultural guidance and the scholarly tutelage of the Fathers of the Society of Jesus, heightens the honor which this grand old College confers on me today, and beggars my vocabulary as I seek to say my gratitude.

Over thirty-five years ago, your Very Reverend Father Rector, Father Louis Gallagher, was a boy in Malden and



I, a somewhat older lad was his neighbor and boyhood friend. Almost fifty years ago, His Eminence, your beloved Cardinal Archbishop had returned from Rome, with the oils of ordination to the Holy Priesthood lately upon his sacerdotal fingers, and in the neighboring parish of St. Joseph's, Medford, began that career of an Apostle of Christ, which in the span of half a century, has brought him by arduous effort, by indefatigable zeal, and by holy devotion to old Mother Church to his present pinnacle of honor and influence, an outstanding Prince of our Church in America, an illustrious member of the Sacred College, the Cardinal of patriotism, the Shepherd of Catholic action and of Catholic culture. Truly may it be said of your beloved Cardinal Archbishop that he is a worthy successor in the See of Boston, to the cultured, zealous, self-sacrificing Cheverus, Boston's first Bishop, the story of whose apostolic ministrations to his far flung flock, in the days of nascent Catholicism in New England, reads like the saga of a saint. Likewise your Cardinal worthily succeeds that eloquent, judicious and saintly Jesuit, Bishop Fenwick, of whom Orestes Bronson said: "Take him all in all he was such a man as Heaven seldom vouchsafes us." Your Archbishop in the fulness of his zeal and indomitable energy justly wears the mantle of his predecessor, Bishop Fitzpatrick, Boston's third Bishop, whose indefatigable labors in nurturing the newly planted seed of Catholic education in Massachusetts will always be remembered. And finally your Cardinal is a worthy successor to that kindly, lovable, sweet and holy soul, whom it was my honor and privilege to have served as an altar boy, Boston's first Archbishop, Most Reverend John J. Williams.

May I therefore, before I proceed with my message to the graduates, offer my congratulations to your Eminence, Boston College's most illustrious alumnus, upon this the fiftieth anniversary year of your ordination to the Holy Priesthood, and upon the monuments to your sacerdotal and episcopal zeal in the Archdiocese of Boston, which link your religious and civic patriotism in grateful and perpetual remembrance?

And to you, Very Reverend Father Rector, in thanking Boston College for the honor which I have received, may I express the hope that I may worthily use it for the greater glory of God and for the advancement of Catholic culture and Catholic action?

And now my dear young graduates, out of my memories and reminiscences over the years that I have sketchily referred to, may I take as it were a text for my message to you? And let it be this: there is no abiding satisfaction in life, there is no success that is worth while or permanent, which is not predicated upon a firm faith in God and achieved according to God-given standards of moral conduct.

Not so long ago I read in one of our New York newspapers a reported utterance of His Eminence, Cardinal O'Connell, in an interview, the occasion of which I have forgotten. I cannot remember the Cardinal's exact words, but the gist and the import of them fixed themselves indelibly in my mind, for I remember mentioning them later to my College classmate, Father George O'Connor of Dedham. The Cardinal said in effect that he feared to see our Catholic people become affluent, because with affluence frequently came a corresponding decadence in adherence to our holy religion and its duties. When I first read that utterance I paused and pondered. But when I analyzed it, I realized that His Eminence, with almost a half century's experience as an Apostle of Jesus Christ, was but reiterating the warning words of Holy Writ: "What doth it profit a man if he gain the whole world and suffer the loss of his own soul? Or what in exchange shall a man give for his soul?"

And only yesterday upon arriving in your city, I read in one of your Boston papers that your Cardinal in addressing the Alumni of your College in an "extemporaneous and fatherly manner," as the newspaper writer put it, had again urged upon his audience that they should not bow down to wealth solely for wealth's sake, calling his hearers' attention in a forthright, courageous and frankly outspoken manner to the fact that often the wealthy are the beneficiaries of the business brigands of another day, concluding his advice with the statement that no man who worships wealth for wealth's sake alone should call himself a Catholic gentleman.

How spiritually wise and how timely was and is that restatement by His Eminence of Holy Writ's warning, the plight in which our Nation and indeed the civilized world finds itself today, is compelling proof. Economists, looking at present day conditions through the eyes of materialistic philosophy call our plight a recurring cycle of economic depression. Well, in so far as mass production has outrun con-

sumption, and exportable surpluses have been made unmarketable by retaliatory tariffs, with the consequence that unemployment has pauperized the proletariat and destroyed their purchasing power, our plight may be called an economic depression.

But who, except the crass materialist, will deny that it was greed and avarice on the part of capital, and a smug, pleasure-satiated satisfaction on the part of the masses with so-called prosperity dollars, to the total disregard of God and God-given standards of moral conduct, which led our Nation to the brink of economic destruction, and to the impasse which has been aptly called "chaotic modernity?"

Over forty years ago that great Pontiff, Leo XIII, pointed out in his famous encyclical *Rerum Novarum*, that industrial relations must have an ethical, a moral aspect. With an inspired vision he inveighed against the overlords of industry who were concentrating the wealth of nations in the hands of the few, leaving only an inadequate usufruct to the toiling masses. He called for a wider distribution of the ownership of property in the interest of a stable and permanent prosperity urging the public authority to intervene by legislation to remedy the ills which his prophetic eye saw must follow from a policy of untrammelled individualism in business and in industry.

To the Catholic of that era, over forty years ago, that encyclical of our statesmanlike Pontiff was the utterance of the Vicar of Christ, the successor of St. Peter on this earth of ours. In those days, while our numerical strength was considerable, our influence in business, in industry, and in the affairs of government and politics was perhaps too small to stem the tide of disregard for this fundamentally moral and Christian pronouncement of Pope Leo, by the predominant blocs of ethicless and often bigoted opposition to anything that savored of Rome, though indeed, outstanding Churchmen of our Faith, and some of the then influential laity, proclaimed the wisdom, the soundness, and above all the Christian morality of the great Pontiff's program.

But the industrial overlords would have none of such a program. Individualism, the heritage of the Protestant Reformation still kept running its suicidal course in economics. And out of the babel of the now well-nigh dogmaless sects of Protestantism were coming the strident voices

of so-called philosophers whose philosophy of very necessity proclaimed individual morality standards, unsanctioned by Divinity, the Divinity which many of them came ultimately to deny.

With inspired foresight, Leo XIII sought to forestall the evil day which is now upon us, and in these memorable words of his encyclical *Rerum Novarum*, he called the Catholic world of over forty years ago to Catholic action. "Catholics," said Leo XIII, "must take the initiative in all true social progress; to show themselves the enlightened counsellors of the weak and defenseless; to be champions of the eternal principles of justice and Christian civilization." But Catholic action in those days, when we were little more than a tolerated minority, was in its infancy of influence as a lay force to hold up the hands of the hierarchy and priesthood, except in so far as our worthy forebears, by example of life and by sacrifice of hard earned wages helped to build up for the generation immediately to come the churches and schools that they hoped would safeguard us from the paganism, the atheism and the crass materialism which their priests and bishops warned them would be our portion if we were left to the mercies of Godless education.

Today we Catholics number more than twenty millions in America. We have long since emerged from the retirement of a tolerated minority. For the past twenty years of the more than forty since Leo XIII's call to Catholic action, our educated Catholic laity in ever increasing numbers have been occupying places of importance and of influence in the industrial, business and political world. And yet today our present gloriously reigning Pontiff Pius XI in his Encyclical *Quadragesimo Anno* gives utterance to these warning words: "What will it profit to teach men sound principles in economics if they permit themselves to be so swept away by selfishness, by unbridled and sordid greed, that, hearing the Commandments of God, they do all things contrary?"

When, therefore, my dear young people, I suggest to you that this depression is something more than an economic depression, I speak to you in the terms of Holy Mother Church, whose visible Head on earth, our Holy Father, has said that a stern insistence on the moral law, enforced with vigor by civil authority, could have dispelled or perhaps averted these enormous evils from which we suffer.

And today as we observe the efforts of our national government under the program of the New Deal to bring back conscience into our governmental processes, and to project legislation designed to enforce the moral law in banking, in business, in industry, and in politics, we should realize that the New Deal is new only in the sense that modern paganism is new. For in very fact, the New Deal is as old in its origin as the moral law thundered down to Moses on Sinai, it is as old in its interpretation as the teachings of Christ on the Mount, it is the attempt of government, whether its sponsors intend it or not, to apply to our civil, social and political relations God-given standards of morality, to substitute the golden rule for the rule of gold in our national life. It is in some measure the admeasurement of our economic life to the pattern of Leo XIII in *Rerum Novarum* and of Pius XI in *Quadragesimo Anno*.

In these days of the New Deal we hear much of the brain trust, and we find college men replacing politicians in the role of advisers to government. God be thanked that intelligence is being substituted for political intrigue and party expediency as a source of legislation. But America must remember that an intelligent New Deal in the reconstruction of the social order must not substitute a mere dead legality for living morality. Legalistic hypocrites will avail no more today than did their prototypes, the Pharisees of Christ's day. In a word the reconstruction of the social order as we Catholics envision it must be spiritual as well as material.

Here again I speak the language of our Holy Father Pope Pius XI in his Encyclical on the Charity of Christ. Like a voice crying out in our modern moral wilderness he says: "For God or against God, this once more is the alternative that shall decide the destinies of all mankind, in politics, in finance, in morals, in the sciences and arts, in the state, in civil and domestic society."

This is the clarion call to service which I, your co-worker in the cause of Catholic Action, would bring to you educated Catholic young people today. Whatever the particular vocation you may choose, your moral and intellectual training fit you to combat, all of you at least by example, and some of you by leadership, the very apparent civilization destroying evils that beset us on every side. Catholic Action, the co-

operation of the laity with the hierarchy and priesthood of Mother Church, can do much to reconstruct the social and industrial order. The application of the ethical concepts which you have been taught will have its effect all unseen, perhaps, by you individually, but in collective action it can bring back order out of chaos.

And to you young people who are about to enter the legal profession, upon you particularly would I urge a faithful adherence to the good old-fashioned principles of rugged honesty. For just as the Apostle St. Paul told the Christians of his day that they must not circumvent their brothers in business, so today we lawyers as the business man's advisers must not cooperate either within or without the law to such circumvention.

Because, for instance, corporate existence precludes the individual incorporator's liability beyond his subscription for capital stock, is no moral reason why corporate existence should be contrived and contorted into the monstrosities of economic fraud, that have, under the guise of holding companies, looted the stock buying public, and lavished this loot upon the creators of these crooked entities. We lawyers have no moral right to aid, assist, or abet such practices. On the contrary, lawyers and lawyer-legislators should vanguard the army that would wipe out these economic and moral iniquities.

Likewise is it our duty as lawyers to stem the tide of perjury that is making a mockery of justice in our land. "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain, Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor, Thou shalt not steal," these are the commandments of God which epitomize all of the canons of ethics of our profession. The great Father of our Country, looking down the corridors of time, and as it were envisioning this evil of perjury, said in his farewell address: "Let it simply be asked, where is the security for property, for reputation, for life, if the sense of religious obligation desert the oaths which are the instruments of investigation in Courts of Justice."

The reconstruction of the social order, therefore, is in no small measure the task of our profession. We lawyers who can be leaders and molders of thought, if we but look to the social effects of our acts, we must scorn perjury, we must expose business dishonesty, we must dissolve the unholy part-

nership between crooked business and crooked politics, we must, crusader like, rescue and defend the holy seats of justice from the sacrilegious hands of the modern Turk who has invaded them.

You young people are coming to our profession at a time when its reputation with the general public is under fire, not because the large majority of lawyers are not upright men, but because an altogether too numerous minority have been exposed, and rightly so, for their faithlessness to the ideals and the ethics of their calling. Because of our crowded ranks the doors of temptation will be open wider to your entrance than the gates of honest success. Be not disheartened, be not afraid. Wealth, as a rule, is not, and cannot be, the portion of the lawyer. An honest living, the respect of your fellowman, leadership in molding the thought and the spirit of your times, will be greater compensation and a holier heritage to your children than ill gotten gain, which may build you a material palace, but will bury you a spiritual pauper.

To all of you young graduates I would urge that you take an interest in public affairs, but always keep the principles of your Catholic education with you. You can render no greater service to your country in this respect than by thinking, judging, and acting according to right reason illumined by the teachings and example of Jesus Christ. A political career solely for political preferment would be literally selling the birthright of your Catholic education for a mess of pottage. A political career for the purpose of translating the ethical principles you have been taught in terms of serviceful citizenship and governmental betterment is making your education a pearl of great price.

Finally, do not be easily discouraged. If you find that suitable employment or further professional study is not immediately available to you, be patient, be prayerful, be honest, and success will ultimately be yours. Remember that the only abiding happiness of life is the sense of duty well done. Youth is a glorious time. It is life's spring time, life's planting time. And as you sow, so also shall you reap. If the harvest of your lives be slow in ripening because of the untoward conditions that I have described, which are not the result of a day or a year, and may take equally long to be remedied, be firm in your faith in God's Providence.



# Women in the New Democracy

HON. SAMUEL B. PETTENGILL, M.C.

*Commencement Address at St. Mary's College, Notre Dame, Ind.,  
delivered June 3, 1934.*

WE find ourselves in the midst of "excursions and alarums" and divided counsels. We see the paradox of the famine of plenty—too little in the land of too much. We see democracy challenged at home and parliamentary governments crashing abroad. We read of the "Decline of the West." We are told that "democracy is a rotting carcass"; and we are warned of impending doom to all that we hold dear. Like a battle line stretching from Switzerland to the North Sea there is no lookout so high that one may see the struggle as a whole, or compute its total movement.

But if democracy is, as we believe, the economic and political application of the Golden Rule—if democracy is secular Christianity, and if to save it is worth the sacrifice our fathers made to establish it, then the problems of popular government in this time of world-wide stress and strain become peculiarly the problems of women, because, if we read events abroad aright, it is women who have the most to lose if democracy goes down. No history, past or present, has ever shown the man on horseback to be tender to the rights of women. If a distinction were to be made between the sexes, it seems certain that women have a greater stake than men in defending democracy and preserving parliamentary institutions.

A word or two about this hue and cry over a political dictator. Let us get clear on this. If I understand the word it means one who interposes his own will on his people. It cannot mean one who executes the people's will, a man elected by the people, with powers conferred upon him by representatives of the people who are also elected by the people, powers conferred by constitutional means and capable of being constitutionally withdrawn at any time—not by a political *coup d'état* or by violence, but by those same representatives, reflecting, as they understand it, the will of the people, and responsible to the people at frequent elections held at unchangeable times fixed by the people's constitution.



We have no dictator in this country except the people themselves. They have wielded sovereign power since 1789. They wield it now. And pray God, they and they alone will wield it in the future.

With all its faults, government by the people has not failed. Nowhere on the round globe have the rank and file enjoyed or can ever hope to enjoy the blessings of liberty except under a constitutional democracy. Where under God's sun have people been happier for a century and a half and had more to make them happy, than right here in America? Let us not discard one hundred and fifty years of history in a moment of breakdown. The alternative forms of government—Fascism, Nazi-ism, and Communism—have not proved that they can last even a fraction as long. Let us remember what Fisher Ames, one of the great orators of the American Revolutionary period once said on this very subject:

If all you want is a smooth running machine, an absolute government is the best that was ever devised. An absolute government is like a man of war, beautiful in motion, irresistible under way, but a single hidden rock will send her to the bottom, while democracy is like a raft, always in trouble, your feet always wet, but nothing can sink her.

A great decision must be made soon. You will help make it. It is to find a sound middle ground between the anarchy of irresponsible individualism and the tyranny of State socialism. That choice is made difficult by the opposing clamor of two classes, both enemies of the Republic, those who oppose everything new, and those who favor nothing old.

It is the old recurring struggle between liberty and power. Can we discipline liberty in order to preserve liberty? Or must democracy be crushed by the iron heel of power? It is not a new question. It is as old as the world. This struggle was compromised along political boundaries between nation and State and county and city—and their citizens—when the Federal Constitution was written. A new compromise along economic boundaries must now be made between men and machines, between science and sociology.

In working out this compromise is there a star by which we may steer? I believe there is, an ancient one, liberty, "ordered liberty," the great middle meeting place between

power and freedom, the noblest compromise ever evolved by men as social animals.

What do we mean by "ordered liberty?" Let me illustrate. Here is a tiny secluded hamlet. You may cross and recross its streets at will. But the hamlet becomes Chicago. You no longer can cross its streets at will. That liberty you have surrendered to the State, symbolized by a blinking red traffic light. But at the same time, all other citizens have surrendered part of their freedom to you. You have actually gained by the exchange.

By obeying that traffic light, you and all others enjoy a greater freedom of movement than you could attain as separate individuals. And it is *your* light. You, or your representatives responsive to your will, erected it. And you are still free to come and go. That is democracy.

The touchstone of legislation seems, therefore, to be this: Will the new controls, the new mechanisms, actually preserve if not in fact enlarge the liberties of the individual? If so, I care not by what name you call them. Freedom to starve in a land of limitless plenty is not freedom. Hunger is a tyrant. If, I said "if," unemployment insurance, old age pensions, insured bank deposits, proration of production, codes of fair competition, actually free men from the fear of losing their homes, from the fear of insecurity, from the fear of age reduced to want, and children compelled to beg, then we will ourselves vote for these controls.

But if they do not enlarge liberty, and opportunity, we will struggle along as best we may rather than embrace the promises of alien philosophers who advertise that *they* know what is good for us. We shall remember Abraham Lincoln's words, "Tyrants always bestride the necks of the people on the theory that it is for the people's good." When all is said and done they are still tyrants and the necks they tread on are ours.

Let us "hold fast to that which is good," freedom to choose one's occupation, freedom to marry the mate whom you select, to nurture and instruct your own children, to worship God in church, cathedral, or synagogue, and finally freedom of speech, of the press, and of the air, which done make all other liberties possible. With all human history to guide us let us resolve that if Americans are the last to love liberty we shall love liberty to the last.

# The Church, the Bulwark of Law

HON. GEORGE WHITE, GOVERNOR OF OHIO

*Address before the Catholic Hospital Association meeting in the  
Cleveland Stadium on June 22, 1934.*

**W**E cannot view with quietude the growth of, and the encouragement for, insidious groups which acknowledge no respect for our laws, and whose considerations do not include Christ or the ideas which He taught or the commands which He gave.

We cannot, moreover, be ignorant of the complacency with which so many of our people look upon certain prevalent forms of immorality which exist today. Only recently the Catholic Church has begun a campaign to fight lasciviousness in the motion pictures. In that fight you have enlisted the aid of every member of your Church, and I learn that several of the Protestant denominations and Jewish congregations have gone on record endorsing this action, and offering their assistance in this crusade. I am sure that it will have the approval of all morally minded people.

A nation cannot continue great, which allows itself to become the victim of selfish economic teachings and paganistic conduct. As witness the rise and decline of the Rome of the Cæsars. When decency no longer was part of the personal code of the Roman citizen, the empire became a nation of weaklings, contempt for discipline and law followed, and eventually Rome fell, a prey not of foreign invaders, but of its own degradation.

I charge you then, my fellow citizens, to continue your fight for God and for the things of God. Let not communistic teachings and personal moral lassitude prevail. Your Church has commanded you to combat them. In obeying that command, which has been a matter of conscience for you, you not only follow the banner of Christ, but uphold that Star Spangled Banner which represents the principles of our nation.

The significance of your presence is a healthy sign of the state of our nation. You represent by your attendance a formidable force in the stabilization of our beloved country. Indeed, I take this opportunity to pay tribute to the

Catholic Church as one of our great bulwarks of law and order.

The Catholic Church has for 2,000 years waged a war against the enemies of the teachings of Christ.

The Catholic Church, in placing upon the conscience of each one of its members the responsibility of saving his soul, has made itself an impregnable wall against practices and doctrines which are not only in violation of the law of our land, but are menaces to our peace as citizens of this great nation.

I commend your Church for this service. It is a consolation to a public official to know that so large a part of those under his jurisdiction can be depended on to consider the rights of his neighbor, and who understand that, in violating rights of his fellows, they not only break a man-made law but the law of God, and stand in direct disobedience to their Church.

The American Hierarchy has expressed in Pastorals and Statements the Catholic mind on motion pictures. Some of these were published in our issue of August 8th. More will be recorded in that of September 8th.